The Future Workforce: Connecting with Gen X and Gen Y Students & Employees

Presented to
The Association of Colleges of Applied Arts &
Technology of Ontario

February 19, 2007
Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto

Agenda

- Brief overview of the four generations
- Gen X and Gen Ys' life-defining events, values and key characteristics
- Translating identities into behaviours in the workplace – relationship with authority & work styles
- Attitudes and expectations towards post-secondary education
- The role of colleges as a bridge
- Collaborating with Gen X & Gen Y employees
- Collaborating with Gen X & Gen Y students
The Four Generations

Traditionalists (1922-1945) 62 – 85 years old
Baby Boomers (1946-1964) 43 – 61 years old
Gen Xers (1965-1980) 27 – 42 years old
Gen Ys (1981-2000) 7 – 26 years old

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Generation X (1965-1980)
(Ages 27 - 42)

Life-defining Events: PCs, AIDS, Challenger Disaster, Massive Corporate Downsizing, Quebec Referendum, Berlin Wall

Attitudes & Values: Self-reliance and independence, pragmatism, skepticism, balance, collaboration

Characteristics & Skills: Flexible & adaptable, creative, independent, multi-taskers, results-driven, techno-literate

"Goal is to maintain independence"

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(Ages 7 - 26)

Life-defining Events: 9/11, School Violence, Reality TV, Digital Technology, Scandals, Y2K, Polarized Canadian Politics

Attitudes & Values: Confidence, diversity, optimism, dedication, civic duty

Characteristics & Skills: Techno-savvy, collective action, pack mentality, innovative, accepting of differences, self-reliant

"Goal is to find work and create a life that has meaning"

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ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS
Identities Translate Into Behaviour

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Link Between Generational Identities and Workplace Behaviour

Generational identities translate into distinct workplace behaviors as they relate to:

- Relationship with organization
- Relationship with authority
- Relationship with colleagues
- Work styles
- Management styles
- Learning styles

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Relationship with Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Traditionalist</th>
<th>Boomer</th>
<th>Gen Xer</th>
<th>Gen Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect for authority and hierarchical system</td>
<td>Challenge authority</td>
<td>Unimpressed by authority</td>
<td>Respect for authority who demonstrate competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviours And Expectations</td>
<td>Seniority and job titles are respected</td>
<td>Desire flat organizations that are democratic</td>
<td>Competence and skills are respected</td>
<td>This generation holds the competency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tell me what I should do for you</td>
<td>Let me show you what I can do for you</td>
<td>Tell me what you can do for me</td>
<td>Show me what you can do for me right now</td>
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### Work Styles

<table>
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<th>Gen Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviours</td>
<td>Follow the rules</td>
<td>Challenge the rules</td>
<td>Change the rules</td>
<td>Create the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Change = Something is broken</td>
<td>Change = Caution</td>
<td>Change = Opportunity</td>
<td>Change = Improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

Expectations & Role
Attitudes & Expectations Towards Post Secondary Education

- Consumerism
- Personalization
- Entitlement
- Egalitarian relationship with authority
- Engaging (Edu-tainment)

The Role of Colleges as a Bridge to the Work World

Greater gap between high school and the working world +
Greater expectations of employees = A need to:

- Provide students with realistic expectations of how they can add value in the work world
- Reinforce the value of certain skill sets / knowledge
- Provide coaching – business etiquette, receiving performance feedback, collaborating with colleagues
- Prepare students to navigate the business environment by understanding corporate values and expectations
COLLABORATION TECHNIQUES
Employees and Students

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Collaboration Techniques that Click with Gen X & Y Employees

- View employees as investors
- Seek a win-win relationship
- Demonstrate the characteristics of organizational engagement – transparent, responsive and partnering
- Participate actively in career collaboration
- Initiate a feedback loop
- Act as a coach / mentor / guide

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Collaboration Techniques that Click with Gen X & Y Students

- Communicate and be accessible via technology
- Be collaborative in all communication – engage students and colleagues in dialogue, don’t just “tell”
- Communicate frequently and informally
- Seek feedback, suggestions and opinions
- Be direct and specific when providing feedback
- When communicating an assignment or task answer the questions ‘what’s in it for them?’

Questions?

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About n-gen People Performance Inc.

n-gen People Performance Inc. (www.ngenperformance.com) supports clients with performance challenges by creating solutions that improve metrics throughout the employee life-cycle. n-gen designs and implements winning performance solutions by tackling the root causes of people performance issues from a generational perspective. We layer on a generational perspective to our practice areas, where appropriate, which adds depth and breadth to the analysis and solution building phase.

n-gen delivers key note presentations, workshops and designs end-to-end solutions to improve metrics and increase engagement in:

- Recruitment
- Orientation
- Retention
- Employee Branding
- Talent management
- Succession planning

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